



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

of the recognized Unity between the Self and the World, is not mere Pantheism. If all were equally divine, nothing would be worth worshipping. But the idea of Evolution enables us to understand a progressive revelation. There are degrees of reality, and of divinity, as man more fully apprehends his true humanity and his oneness with the spirit which is in the world. "This long, unhasting, unresting process of the Evolution of Religion is itself the best evidence we can have that there is a divine meaning in the world, and that mankind have not laid the sacrifice of their efforts and their thoughts, their prayers, and their tears, on the altar of an unknown or an unknowable God.\*

BERNARD BOSANQUET.

LONDON.

---

### LABOR TROUBLES—CAUSES AND PROPOSED REMEDIES.

MR. WRIGHT's article in the January number of this JOURNAL † touches upon some extremely interesting points in the labor problem, which are discussed with his usual wide knowledge of practical questions and with an equally commendable sympathy for those who suffer injustice. But, in spite of these merits in his paper, I think a most important point has been ignored, and it leads to such extended consequences that it deserves some notice.

The general ground upon which Mr. Wright seems to base an advocacy of arbitration as a means of solving the labor problem is the assertion that morality in commercial business has greatly increased, and therefore we can rely upon moral methods in dealing with labor disputes. But the fatal defect in this argument is that it does not distinguish between two radically different kinds of morality,—namely, *subjective* morality, which is good will or action from the sense of duty, virtue for its own sake; and *objective* morality, which is action exter-

---

\* Caird, "Evolution of Religion," conclusion.

† Page 137.

nally good or conducive to a stable social order, though the motive may be no higher than prudence or self-interest. Now, the latter kind of morality may have increased, as it is most likely to do with the increase of population and the occupation of natural resources, which greatly limit human liberty and independence. But improvement in conduct which is only a prudent or enforced adjustment to environment is no guarantee that subjective morality exists. This may be wanting as ever, and yet its existence is absolutely essential to the solution of the labor problem, whether by arbitration or otherwise. The broker may deposit the bonds on the desk of his patron with surer regularity and exemption from distrust, but it may not be because he is more honest than formerly, but because under a highly developed social organization with its diminishing opportunities for new business the risks may be too great to attempt fraud. The means of detection may be more perfect than in the past. Conduct in such a case may only *conform* to the moral law, but not be dictated by it. External pressure is the instrument for developing this conformity.

Now, it is of the very nature of our present political and social life to develop the pressure which will regulate conduct more effectively. Population is dense and is making rapid inroads upon all the available resources of wealth and subsistence, and consequently every individual must adjust himself to the wants of the community in which he is placed, or purchase independence in a new country and with the sacrifice of some of the strongest impulses in human nature. This fact increases the restraints upon his conduct, but may not modify the intrinsic nature of his character in the least. Again, modern industrial development, both in the direction of machinery for increasing production and in the direction of transportation to distant points, has been the most powerful of all forces for creating, in the manifold adjustments of business, the greatest solidarity of interests and dependence upon each other for support, and consequently the liberty that would lead to objectively bad conduct of a disastrous kind is greatly restricted. A transportation company lives in constant danger

of losing patronage, on the one hand, by destroying production, if it exacts exorbitant tolls, and of state interference, on the other, if it disregards public interest. The manufacturer, living under the severest competition, must, unless he has a monopoly, meet the demands of the community. The rates of profit are so reduced by competition that the least suspicion of unfair dealing or dishonesty may mean bankruptcy. This pressure upon the merchant and the manufacturer must result in the severest exactions of honesty and good work from employees, and everywhere we find an enormous organization of forces tending in the same direction,—namely, in the direction of enforcing obedience to a certain code of rules, and they will not care what the motive to obedience is. They demand nothing but external morality. Of course, internal morality will be at a premium in such a system, but, if environment is strong enough, equal in all directions, and sufficiently invariable in its effects, there would be no need of this subjective morality, however admirable it might be. The object of the social organism would be accomplished without it. There is a certain set of actions necessary to the economic and political integrity of society, and it will not matter what the motive may be in securing this result. Hence the improvement which such industrial and social forces may bring about may not reflect any improvement of character, but only an increased consideration of personal interest, or adjustment to suit this interest, and there might not be the slightest element of morality in it, even of the objective kind, unless the forces exerting the pressure to secure a code of conduct, themselves be of a moral nature.

Enough has been said in a general way to define what kind of "morality" it is which characterizes the growth of modern industrial life, and we have found that it is only the fixity of those conditions which restrict human liberty and necessitate adjustment to them as indispensable to the preservation of the strongest interests felt by the subject. Now we may well ask why this environment is not more effective than it is in preventing crime, and the answer is that there are two reasons: (a) criminal impulses and instincts are often stronger than any

pressure that environment may exert ; pauper tendencies may also be the same ; (b) the environment is neither constant nor equal in all directions, so that the same individual varies in his immunities while his character remains the same. I shall not lay any stress at present upon the first of these considerations. It is the second that has the most importance for us. It calls attention to the most significant fact in the whole problem,—namely, the need of internal morality to give regularity and law to human conduct when environment is variable or ineffective. For instance, no amount of vigilance in a bank, short of the constant attention of the officers, can secure it from the risk of embezzlement and fraud except the absolutely trustworthy character of the employees and officers themselves. There is a limit to the expense of the necessary machinery for preventing fraud, and this is the rate of interest on investments. The director cannot watch the book-keeper all the time, and book-keeping may be made so complicated as to absorb a disproportionate amount of profits. Then what is to hinder conspiracy, except a complicated machinery which, while it prevents crime, absorbs profits? Then who shall guarantee the faithfulness of the higher officers themselves who superintend the conduct of others and enjoy on that account a larger amount of freedom? So it is with every form of business. The pressure upon subordinates is not the same for every moment, and the exemption of superiors is often such as to make them practically independent of environment. Under these conditions the only guarantee of justice is good character, while the increased organization in the force and complexity of environment is a proof that this character does not exist. And we have only to look at the demoralization caused by war or an epidemic, or the relaxation of ordinary restraints, to see that this want of moral character is most lamentable, even where we supposed that civilization has reached a high development. It is certain that it does not keep pace with the organization of environment, which is governed more by economic considerations and influences of personal interest than by any moral ideal which ought to regulate human conduct.

The conclusion from all these observations is that there are two totally distinct forces in the production of morality; one is the organization of power, and the other is the domination of conscience. The former has no necessary tendency to evoke the latter, and when the latter exists there is no necessity for the former. It is apparent, therefore, that the two are not developed in the same proportion in the existing social system, and that we cannot use the improvement of society in objective morality to attest the development of conscience. For aught we know from the conditions described by Mr. Wright, the domination of conscience may not have increased at all. We are inclined to think that it has increased as a matter of fact, but it is neither conditioned by the growth of objective morality nor so prominent among the units of the social organism that we can construct the machinery of society with sole reference to that supposition. Undoubtedly the power which is able and disposed to enforce objective morality may be subjectively moral; but this even is not absolutely essential, because prudence might dictate the same use of power, though we should place more confidence in a social system whose foundation is conscience, for the reason that environment is so changeable a medium that interest may change with it, and there may be no higher principle within to urge the sacrifice involved in respect for a higher law than a momentary interest. Hence, on account of the disparity between the two stages of development, I must insist that we shall not assume methods of social reform conditioned by the domination of conscience, when nothing is proved except the result of a better organized environment, which is no guarantee that conduct can be left to the spontaneity of duty.

When we come to look over the whole field of labor troubles and classify the various causes producing them under some general principle, I think we shall find that they are expressed in defects of moral character which appear in their exaggerated forms in crime and incompetency. But these terms are too well defined and too invidious to employ in the discussion. Instead, therefore, of expressing the obstacles to better economic and moral conditions in terms of crime and incompe-

tency and the mental qualities that lead to them, we may call attention to a fact which probably no one will deny,—namely, *the universality of the desire to obtain one's living without work, especially of the humble kind.* If this be too strong a way of putting the case, we can say: with the least possible amount of work for the greatest possible returns. This disposition is a moral defect of human nature which manifests itself in a variety of ways, and which requires to be overcome along with a number of other impulses before we can expect any effective remedy for social ills. This ought to be a truism, but it is seldom if ever recognized in the efforts made to ameliorate society. In one form it manifests itself as criminality, in another as vagrancy, in another as scamping one's work, in another as fraud and cheating, in another as miserliness, in another as the exploitation of labor, in another as jobbery in politics, and in a thousand ways by which money may be obtained without giving its equivalent in return. This disposition is one source of all the inequalities of which the laborer complains, and is sufficient to cause all of them, though it is often combined with other qualities which aggravate its influence,—namely, extravagance or expense of his entire income and imprudence in marriage. The latter fact is connected with thirty-five to forty per cent., and sometimes fifty per cent. of all the poverty which society is called upon to mitigate, since this is the proportion of persons under fifteen years of age who require relief. But at present we are concerned only with the influence of the disposition to evade work and to live upon the services of others, directly or indirectly. This influence, coupled with the causes just mentioned and the various defects of human nature, create *the inequality in the distribution of goods*, which is the great evil complained of and which it is sought to cure. But I must contend that the world at large is either wholly mistaken as to the evil of unequal distribution, or wholly at fault in not recognizing that the cause is a worse moral evil than unequal distribution is an economic evil, and hence perpetually look in the wrong direction for salvation from it. As for myself, I must wholly deny that unequal distribution, even

to the extent of producing an immense amount of poverty, is undesirable. It is the natural and legitimate consequence of moral defects, which ought to result in this way, if the law of desert in ethics is to be recognized at all, which is that a man ought to reap the benefits and bear the consequences of his own conduct, if any correction of those moral defects be possible.

Before discussing this point further, I must establish a principle which must be kept constantly in view in the solution of labor problems. The above fact about the real condition and aspirations of human nature shows, what perhaps every one admits without dispute, but quite as often neglects in its meaning and implication,—namely, *the need of a motive to work*. Possibly this is well enough recognized, but certainly it is not sufficiently recognized that a *particular kind of motive* is absolutely necessary. Now, the motive to work may be either (a) *the sense of duty* or (b) *personal interest*. The very small extent to which the first of these motives prevails is too well known to require proof, and especially among the working classes. But that the majority of mankind do their work from the love of it and conscientiously with reference to its rightness is a proposition which no student of human nature will venture to assert; and yet until it is done we must rely upon methods of governing man which leave the appeal to duty out of account. Personal interest then remains as the disposition with which we have to deal. But it has little meaning outside a reference to the diversified incidents that affect it and the equally diversified conditions of human nature which determine those incidents. This is to say that personal interests in the concrete world are not the same, or do not seem to be the same. Hence the competition, struggle, and social warfare which we find prevailing. But it would perhaps be better to recognize four classes of influence determining the motives to work, apart from the inherent love of activity. I shall call them *social*, *political*, *economic*, and *natural*. The social influence is the pressure of public opinion which respects and encourages only those who earn their living honorably. Political pressure is the power of government, and would be



fully realized in the system of socialism where the state would assume all the responsibilities of production and distribution. Economic pressure represents the present system of private property in natural resources, where the pressure is exerted, not by political forces, but by a system which permits the application of agreement and contract. Natural pressure is simply the influence exercised by one's own nature, one's wants, and their relation to the supply of food possible in the world. This last influence cannot be affected by any policy we may choose to adopt. But it is the influence against which human nature cannot complain, for the reason that it cannot modify it, but must adjust itself to it. The system of agencies, therefore, which is to solve the labor problem must adapt itself to this influence as far as possible, in order, human nature being what it is, to achieve the world's work without unnecessary friction and complaint. That is to say, the pressure whose influence will be least resisted and most effective will be that of natural forces or that which acts as nearly like them as is possible. Now, as public opinion, which is wholly a moral influence, is wholly ineffective as an influence except as it supports the appeal to force, it both proves the lack of moral qualities on the part of those who refuse to accept its verdict, unless public opinion itself is not moral, and eliminates it as a sufficient motive to affect work. Hence we are left to choose between political and economic pressure as the instrument for determining production, *purely* natural pressure being excluded by the ratio between population and existing production or the extent to which natural resources are occupied and cultivated.

We find ourselves, therefore, reduced to two alternatives in considering the means of determining the relation that shall subsist between capital and labor. They are the organization of industry, productive and distributive, under political or government control, and the continuance of the present socio-economic system. The former of these systems is socialism, as we have seen, and the instinct of mankind is correct when it chooses this resource as the only alternative to the present system, supposing that there are no alternative questions to

consider. If the present economic system is an evil to be gotten rid of, and if men are on the average moral enough to manage political industrialism, there can be no doubt that socialism is the ideal polity to adopt. But the laboring man must remember that it inevitably means slavery, or the loss of individual freedom, the right to freedom of contract. If he will accept that consequence, and worse, the consequences of his own ignorance in the selections of his representatives and rulers, there will be nothing to say against socialism. But it must cut off all personal liberty and initiative in the selection of callings and the rates of wages, which will have to be determined by the total amount of production. A thousand other consequences might be named, but as all thinkers are practically agreed in regard to the fatality of such a system, and as the effects of it would disappoint the expectations of its advocates, there is no need to dwell upon the matter. Its concentration of arbitrary power makes it a most intolerable despotism, and hence we require here only to mention this and the other facts in order to see that a resort to it from the present economic system is jumping from the frying-pan into the fire. Well, then, if political organization and power will not solve the problem, do we mean to propose the only apparent alternative of which so much complaint is made,—namely, the present socio-economic system? This is the assumed evil to be removed, and now do we propose to let it alone? Have we only the devil and the deep sea between us in the treatment of this problem?

In answer to these questions I can only say that we shall return to them presently. It is enough to have ascertained that, aside from the moral solution of the problem, we have only external pressure of some kind offered us, and this can be embodied only in government, and the present system of private property and the competitive economic system. If they will not solve it, we must either leave the problem unsolved or seek the solution elsewhere. With these observations we may turn briefly to the consideration of Mr. Wright's proposal of arbitration, and ascertain what may be expected of it.

Now, arbitration must be either compulsory or voluntary. If it be compulsory, it must involve the application of the whole socialistic principle, and so, when necessary, compel the laborer as well as the capitalist to adopt a course contrary to his desires. No one is so jealous to-day of such power as the laborer, and he cannot expect to exempt himself from compulsion while putting the capitalist under it. Society is not possible under such conditions. It is only the creation of a new caste worse than the one of which the laborer now complains. In fact, no practical man can see his way to recommend compulsory arbitration as a solution of the problem without endorsing socialism in its worst forms. On the other hand, can anything be accomplished by voluntary arbitration? Unless there be power to coerce one or both parties to accept this adjudication of their claims, there will be no obligation to accept the policy. Whether economic interest will induce either party to accept it will depend upon circumstances. Often the interest of either laborer or capitalist will be on the side of refusing arbitration, and the present condition of warfare will remain. Where both sides consent to abide by arbitration, and there is no guarantee that they will ever or always accept the resort and its decision, good effect may follow in terminating immediate conflict, but the adjustment of this *does not remove the conditions which provoked the trouble at the beginning*. This must be accomplished prior to any complete solution of the problem at all. Hence we find ourselves left with the present economic system or political socialism after arbitration has been adopted, and no final results have been reached. Moreover, arbitration aims at an economic solution of a problem that is in reality moral, and must, therefore, fail in default of results that reach the real causes of the difficulty. Where difficulties originate merely from misunderstanding, it will be a very useful and effective policy. But it is probable that the majority of contests do not have their rise in mere misunderstanding. They are more probably the outcome of irreconcilable interests between wills that have no serious purpose of being moral, and in such instances arbitration, unless compulsory, must cut a very poor figure. Consequently

we are left with the present condition of things or its alternative,—arbitrary and despotic government.

Perhaps it will be said that all this is a truism. We grant it. But we felt it necessary to state clearly and finally the limits to the application of external pressure and the necessity of it in the attempt at the improvement of human conduct. Some form of pressure we regard as necessary unless men suddenly become much more moral than experience shows them to be, and we may choose between government and the present economic system. For my own part, I propose here to offer an apology for the present order and then consider what is necessary for the removal of the evils charged to it.

The fundamental characteristic of the present economic system is its basis upon private property. The nature of this institution is *the distribution of the pressure necessary to produce a motive to work over a larger area than would be possible in government*. This is a most important consideration in that it transforms *political* into *economic* power, a far more safe investiture of external pressure than any that can be placed in the hands of democratic rulers, because it is a nearer approximation to natural pressure, which is always the safest when possible. Private property is the endowment of prudence, the wages of thrift and economy. Nor does it matter how much wealth is thus controlled, nor whether it is obtained by inheritance. As long as expenses do not exceed income, the principle just announced will hold true, though a man spend millions a year in a sheer waste of his means. The maintenance of the system depends only upon the adjustment of expenses to income after it is established, but can be established in the first place only by living *within* that income. As we left the savage state it was necessary to endow the prudent man with superior rights and powers, partly on the ground of his virtue and partly for the reason that it was necessary as a means of providing against the undue increase of population by those who had no means to support it, and of substituting economic pressure for political as a motive to work. This is undoubtedly placing society upon an economic basis, and the policy exposes the individual to all the consequences of such

forces. But it is absolutely necessary nevertheless, for the simple reason that in the struggle for existence between beings in whom moral and social instincts do not predominate there is nothing to distinguish them except the quality of physical power, or economic prudence. The latter is the nearest approach to a moral qualification—nay, is a moral qualification of a certain grade—that can be chosen for bestowing the right to exert pressure upon the indolent, imprudent, and unthrifty to aid in the world's needed production. Unfortunately, this one virtue of economic prudence may be conjoined with all sorts of vices which make the condition that it determines a very un-ideal one, in that it grants more power and greater rewards to skill, intelligence, and economy than to virtues which ordinarily stand upon a higher level in the estimation of the best men. It seems to confer undue favors upon mere stinginess, as some would call economic prudence, rather than upon conscientiousness, moral honesty, and the various social virtues of a higher type. This is true. But there are quite justifiable reasons for it.

In the first place, the primary necessity, not to say duty, of all life, individual and social, is economic supply, and this can be obtained only by some kind of external pressure where duty is not the dominant motive in conduct. The safest application of this pressure, experience shows, is in the present economic system, with all its evils and abuses,—that is, economic as opposed to political pressure. Nature places a high value upon the saving instinct, or the desire to be prepared for emergencies,—we might say, a higher value than upon any other virtue. It is the only resource by which progress can be obtained while providing for the necessary wants of the human race, unless we discover the prevalence of better motives than mere preservation from starvation. The consumer must be made to supply his own wants, and, if he is too indolent to do so voluntarily, or to seek the development of higher possibilities, we may legitimately exact contributions from him by the pressure which demands that he support an ideal order in some way, if it be only the larger economic supply of society. It may be that the distribution appears

unfair, but careful analysis will show that this is largely determined by, and proportioned to, the desire for what is distributed. Fashion, fads, vanity, social ambition, and a number of other cravings, which only reflect want of independence, want of prudence, and lack of wisdom to arm oneself against the power of money, are forces that affect distribution and create inequality between men; and hence, when large numbers of the population live on the margin of want, from the failure to prepare for the contingencies of production and exchange, they must expect the world's power to fall into the hands of those who are prepared for such emergencies.

In the second place, when we survey the field of human nature we find that in the majority of cases the ideal of life is almost wholly economic, if not entirely so. The rich man wants wealth for the sake of some form of self-indulgence. This is either true in the majority of cases, or is the general belief of mankind, and serves our argument in either alternative. On the other hand, the great object of the laboring classes is called "an improvement of their condition," though we find on examination that it is better wages, more of the physical comforts of life, more amusement, more leisure, and perhaps more beer and liquor. These are well enough as rewards of prudence and the various virtues of self-control. But the laborer is not so zealous for the virtues that put him on an equal competitive footing with others as he is for higher wages, and as a consequence ought to expect, and ought to be made to bear, the consequences of his folly. In a world *where the ideals are economic*, there can be no other principle for regulating the station and rewards of the individual than economic prudence; and money, not justice, will be the criterion of survival and power. The economic differences of men are but reflections of their moral differences in respect to the one characteristic which determines them, and, as long as their ideals are predominantly economic, it is absurd to cry at the pain that comes from pursuing them. We may have other desires also, but as long as the attainment of their satisfaction is conditioned wholly upon that prudence which equips us for the struggle of exist-

ence, we must not quarrel with the consequence of ignoring that condition. But even these desires, when they occur, are not only conditioned as we have indicated, but they are in such a minority, or so inferior in influence and prevalence to economic ideals, that the latter must get the first place in the recognition of social life, and evils must exist precisely for the reason that the ideal of life in general does not contain any other object or result as its consequences. The economic ideal is not based upon any other principle than individualism, and man is nothing more than individualistic in his nature,—that is, the majority of the race; and society can reflect only what the majority of its units represent. Hence, with the want of a true social spirit upon which to base justice and equality, the only safe resource for society is the principle of economic prudence with all the competition that it involves; and yet almost every effort to redeem man ignores the moral basis upon which it must be done.

Arbitration, unions, and various other methods of reconciling capital and labor and producing more equal distribution of goods do not get beyond this economic ideal. It may seem very well that wages ought to be higher, that wealth ought to be more evenly, not to say equitably distributed, but in fact this demand for more equal distribution assumes a greater moral equality between men than exists. Men are not morally equal, except in scholastic philosophy and theology. They may be equal in some respects, but not in the fundamental quality of economic prudence and intelligence, which can be the only criteria for the right to use the power—social, economic, and moral—concentrated in the institution of property, a power which is designed in the nature of things to accomplish several important results: (*a*) to distribute the pressure necessary to effect the world's work; (*b*) to relieve the state from the responsibility for poverty; (*c*) to keep some control over the increase of population; (*d*) to give the rewards of life to prudence, self-control, and intelligence, and thus to support that struggle by which evolution seems to be conditioned. We do not confuse wealth with property here, because wealth may be a degenerating force, or it may

not; but we mean the institution as it affects the welfare and supremacy of the great middle class, who are after all the salt of the earth, so far as it has any salt at all. This prudence is the individual's defence against the neglect and the want of social virtues in others, as well as the claim to economic power, and thus is necessary to insure the survival of the fittest, the importance of which no one at this day can question.

As a proof that the laboring classes are wanting in this fundamental virtue,—namely, economic prudence,—we have only to compare their contributions to population with that of the more well-to-do property holders. Every one knows that these are much greater, that by far the largest additions made to population come from those who forever live on the margin of want. Health and good luck save many from suffering who would be added to the great throng of poor about us, as is distinctly proved by the enormous increase of poverty on the occasion of a commercial panic or other trade disaster. They may possess many other virtues which society estimates highly, but they lack this most important one which nature places above all others, and which reflects self-preservation and independence, while they cultivate a constant *spirit of dependence on others*, a moral defect which would make society impossible, if granted any property or political rights equal to their numerical power. They as constantly weaken their influence and chances in the world by adding to population beyond their power to give it adequate support. Their families absorb all their incomes and help to swell the profits of the rich; and they are either wholly unaware of their situation, or they neglect it and organize strikes against property, as a protection against their own folly and imprudence. Aside from the incidental proof of their imprudence drawn from the consequences of commercial disasters, I may refer to more emphatic evidence in the figures already mentioned regarding the proportion of poor in charge of the State and dependent upon private charity who are children below fifteen years of age. This is reinforced by the figures in nearly all the Charity Organization Reports regarding the "social" state of



applicants for relief. It is found that the proportion of such applicants who are married, widowed, or deserted runs up to eighty per cent. and in many cases to ninety per cent.; and that the proportion of single persons who apply for relief rarely reaches ten per cent., and is often as low as three per cent. The condition of "single blessedness" is thus a weapon of self-defence and secures chances of survival in the struggle for existence which cannot accrue to the marital state, especially if encumbered with a large family. Hence imprudent marriages only add to the proof of a moral defect which must first be corrected before any solution whatever is possible for labor problems. They add to the competition for labor, and to the numbers who are to receive dividends from the world's production, and both of these must produce conditions which neither government nor arbitration can modify, short of assuming control of population. In the light of this moral defect the whole method or system of methods designed to equalize distribution must fail, and ought to fail, according to every admitted principle of morality. No man deserves economic power who does not possess economic prudence. This does not mean or imply that all who possess economic prudence should possess the power conferred by our present system, but it does mean that it is not safe to intrust it to any one else. A man must have at least that virtue before he is entitled to any consideration in a social system charged with the responsibilities of providing for the world's production and consumption. If he has it not, there is no resource but external pressure which will make him do his duty, and this pressure must be either that of government or the institution of private property. Both will entail evil as long as there are not other virtues to counteract the cut-throat tendencies of competition and mere economic prudence on the part of those who have it and it alone. Equality of moral nature, at least in the instinct of economic prudence, is absolutely essential to any equality of distribution in economic rewards, and until this is secured it is vain to expect redemption by increasing wages or by more equal distribution of wealth.

Instead of strikes, labor unions, arbitration, or any such

measures, we should recommend the following considerations as more likely to afford relief and improve the conditions of labor. The first of them are purely political measures, designed, not to directly equalize economic distribution, but to equalize the opportunities for it, as far as inequalities of intelligence and character will permit it, and to insure honest government. The immediate pressing needs, therefore, before all other amelioration is possible are: (1) freedom of trade, by which all men will be put upon an equal footing in the competition for a share of the world's production; (2) civil-service reform, by which more trustworthy officers can be obtained for the administration of government; (3) improved methods of selecting government officers. At present every demagogue and scoundrel who wants office can play upon the ignorance, passions, and prejudices of the laborer, outbid the intelligent and honest man for place, and then enrich himself by jobbery and blackmail, the laborer standing by all the while and admiring the politician as his friend! These are political reforms so urgent that nothing can be done for labor until they are effected. All the popular efforts of the day looking to the workman's redemption by increased wages and neglecting the priority of these considerations simply pay out in taxation of some kind what they reap in other ways.

But the most important conditions are still to be noted. They are wholly moral, and after all the previous conditions are fulfilled the problem will remain unsolved unless these are realized. They are: (1) prudence in marriage and family responsibilities, otherwise the laborer simply multiplies the competition which is his source of complaint, and the number of those who must share his product; (2) economy in the use of his income, so as to place him upon a level of competition with the property holder; there is no equality, and ought to be no equality, of economic conditions between the thrifty and the thriftless; (3) co-operative organization against the unjust or supposedly unjust power of capital. We mean co-operative production and distribution. These three conditions are absolutely indispensable to any solution of the question, and any method which ignores them deserves no sym-

pathy or aid whatsoever. But there is no effort made in this direction adequate to its needs, or proportioned to the amount of money and enthusiasm spent in the wrong direction. If laborers would show the intelligence and character necessary to the successful application of co-operation, they would soon put an end to corporate capital enlisted against them and might bring about the millennium, for they would at once put a stop to that power which they complain of so bitterly. But instead of this they seek to blackmail property, which is the consequence of their own improvidence, to determine their own incomes against the law of desert and without any willingness to share in the responsibility for the world's production, the irresponsibility of capital being nothing but the price paid for the liberty of imprudence, and to sympathize with arbitrary and tyrannical methods which only add political to economic slavery. The real needs are, on the one hand, strong, intelligent, and incorruptible government, and, on the other, as much providence and self-control on the part of the laboring class as it demands justice on the part of the property class. Unless proper and strenuous efforts are made to bring this conception home to the laboring poor, unless our methods and enthusiasm are spent upon showing that the problem is moral and not economic, and unless the poor are made to feel their own share of responsibility for the present condition of things, instead of shifting the whole of it on the injustice of capital, thus cultivating and sustaining the very dependence upon others of which they complain,—unless these things are done, and the various socialistic methods abandoned as playing with fire in a powder magazine, I for one confess that I shall contemplate the growing tendencies to anarchy with much malicious satisfaction.

JAMES H. HYSLOP.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, NEW YORK.